

REMARKS

Applicants have amended their claims in order to further clarify the definition of various aspects of the present invention. Specifically, Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite that the conductor paste, used in forming the conductor film, does not contain any glass; claim 1 has been further amended to recite that, in the processing in forming the conductor film, the conductor paste has been stuck on a glass ceramic sheet board which has not been sintered or has been sintered. In connection with these amendments to claim 1, note claim 3.

Moreover, Applicants are adding new claim 4 to the application. Claim 4 defines an electronic component which has a conductor film formed on a glass ceramic board, formed by the method of claim 3.

The restriction requirement set forth in the Office Action mailed September 24, 2002, is noted. In response thereto, Applicants respectfully elect the Group I claims, claims 1 and 2, drawn to an electronic component. This election is made with traverse, in view of the following, particularly in light of the claims as presently amended.

That is, it is respectfully submitted that, particularly as presently amended, the electronic component claims do not define an independent and distinct invention from the method claim such that restriction under 35 USC 121 is proper. In this regard, the Examiner contends that, in connection with the original claims, restriction was proper because the process can be used to make a materially different product. That is, the Examiner contends that the process requires that the conductive paste not contain the glass, while the article claims do not have that limitation; and that the incorporation of glass in the conductor paste affects the properties of the paste and

the electrical component that it is used in. However, note presently amended claim 1, as well as newly added claim 4. Claim 1 now specifically recites that the conductor paste, used in forming the conductor film, does not contain any glass. Thus, clearly the reason given by the Examiner for restriction in the Office Action mailed September 24, 2002, is no longer applicable with respect to amended claim 1.

Similarly, noting that claim 4 defines the structure formed by method claim 3, it is respectfully submitted that claim 4 must be considered together with claims directed to the electronic component and that there is not sufficient independence and distinctness between, for example, claims 3 and 4, such that restriction between the claims directed to the electronic component and the claim directed to the method of manufacturing the electronic component would be proper.

Furthermore, again noting close relationship between the claims directed to the electronic component (noting especially claims 1 and 4), on the one hand, and the claims directed to the method (claim 3), on the other, it is respectfully submitted that, even though these groups of claims are directed to separate statutory classifications, due to the close relationship there is no undue burden for the Examiner to consider both groups of claims in the same application. Accordingly, for this reason also, the restriction requirement should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

See Manual Of Patent Examining Procedure 803.

In summary, in view of the foregoing, and particularly in light of the presently amended claims, reconsideration and withdrawal of the restriction requirement set forth in the Office Action mailed September 24, 2002, and consideration of all claims presently pending in the above-identified application, are respectfully requested.

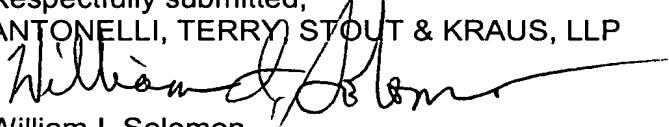
In any event, in order to provide a complete response to the Office Action mailed September 24, 2002, Applicants respectfully elect the Group I claims, claims 1 and 2 (and newly added claim 4), drawn to an electronic component, and make this election with traverse.

Examination of the above-identified application on the merits, in due course, in light of the foregoing, is respectfully requested.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current Amendment. The changes being shown on the attached page captioned "VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE".

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Case No. 566.40595X00), and please credit any excess fees to such Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,
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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

1. (Amended) An electronic component comprising:
a ceramic board containing glass; and
a conductor film stuck to the ceramic board,
wherein the conductor film is formed by firing a conductor paste, which does
not contain any glass and which contains [containing] a silver particle having a
specific surface area of 0.3 m²/g to 3.0 m²/g, at a temperature having a difference of
[±50°C] ±50°C from a softening temperature of the glass, the conductor paste having
been stuck on a glass ceramic sheet board which has not been sintered or has been
sintered.